

# Spark Gap MARC

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## the Virus

Once upon a time two young people became interested in the technique of conversing over a radio link from one home to the other, just for some good old American fun! On their first attempts they had problems; but soon learned how to make the new gadget work very efficiently, and their conversation didn't cost them any money.... These two people had found a way to chat on their own leisure time and without the use of wires. Before long the word spread of this fun and challenging concept and others began to join them on the radio link. Soon the link had a name, radio hobby, and more and more people were joining in the FUN, in fact the numbers participating were doubling by leaps and bounds and before long there wiretaps of thousands having fun on the radio links.

About half way through this story, some other folks created a new technology system, called the Internet and it was fun too!

Conflicts concerning time and money spent on those two systems grew to such a great proportion that some people decided to just pursue the internet because it was very easy to use...

As with any hobby the radio link people began to notice some reduction in their participation numbers. "This was to be expected", said some, and time passed. This time element brought with it another problem and the hobby people couldn't define the reason for all the lack in participation.. No one was showing up for the radio link fun sessions any more.

Perplexed by this event the radio link people many meetings and discussed to try and come up with the answer to their dropping numbers in their fun

sessions...

Time passed on, and some of the old people aged; some died, and others just lost interest in the fun radio links. All the young people were having fun with the easy and less challenging internet, but very few tried the radio link system in the later years of this story. The old people hadn't brought younger people into their fun hobby so the only ones left to work the radio link system were the old timers...!

After many hours of talking and discussions, the best minds in the country concluded, that the massive decay of radio link hobby participation could be defined as; the.. " **LACK of COMMENT VIRUS**". Shortly after the determination of the virus was announced the radio link people realized, that "VIRUS" could not be reversed; and **HAM RADIO CEASED TO EXIST....!**

P.E. Watts

## Amateur Radio Club Workshop

Indiana's first Amateur Radio Club Workshop has been a huge success.

Saturday March 25, 2000 over thirty representatives from amateur radio clubs around the state participated in a half day workshop at the University of Indianapolis. The workshop grew from the need to find answers to Why hams don't participate in club meetings or public service projects.

Jack Parker-W8ISH organized the event with help from Eric Eilers-K9ZX Chuck Crist-W9IH was workshop moderator. Once the participants finished with coffee and donuts the creative juices began to

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flow. The workshop was held in the DeHaan Fine Arts Center. The participants were split into smaller groups with a team moderator who challenged them with a list of discussion topics and questions. surrounded by original student art projects the hams began to craft a set of ideas on how to bolster club member participation. Each group searched for solutions to questions like: Why has Amateur Radio participation dropped? Are there any problems with ham club structures or operations? What are the areas of interest in clubs? How can we best get information out to prospective hams in our area?

During the Wrap Up session each group reported the main points of each question while moderator Chuck Crist kept track of the results. The workshop results will be tabulated and shared with the participation clubs. Follow-up workshops are being planned for other areas if Indiana. If you have interest in attending a future workshop or have suggestions to these and other problems concerning amateur radio, contact Jack Parker-W8ISH at w8ish@arrl.net.

As Russ Simpson-WA0JTL wrote

"The first step of a new journey by Indiana Amateurs has begun. Sharing of good ideas and a closer association with local amateur clubs could lead to a more robust Amateur Radio Service."  
W8ISH

## **Local news and coming events**

### **Testing**

April 15Th. was our last club meeting. The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club Ve Team had a long day. Upgrading and prospective new hams came to be tested in record numbers, they were trying to pass examinations under the old and less challenging question pool, which would expire on that day. Our VE Team worked well into the afternoon and were able to handle all comers. I left at about 11:00 am. and the line for registration had not yet been depleted. I don't have the exact numbers but I am told 52 tests were administered, some where successful and some were not. Several new

Amateurs were passed along with several new Extras and Techs. We should give our VE team a big hand for having the fortitude to handle such an onslaught of examines.  
WA9ZET

## **Tornado Spotting Class**

There will be a Tornado Spotting Class, conducted by personnel from the National Weather Service. The class will be held on April 26, 2000 at 7:00 pm. in the Emergency Operations Center, located in the basement of the Johnson County Law Enforcement Facility, 1111 Hospital Rd., Franklin, In.  
All RACES members are urged to attend. All other Amateurs and other interested parties are welcome.  
WA9ZET

## **Skywarn Presentation**

FYI. OUR CLUB IS INVITED. E-MAIL ME OR MIKE, NZF IF YOU CAN ATTEND. A CAR POOL WOULD BE NICE. HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE.  
JACK/W8ISH

Here are the details:

Date: Monday April 17

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Place: Martinsville High School Auditorium B  
1360 E. Gray St.

Meteorologist: Jason Puma

Skywarn is an informative program presented by the National Weather Service to educate and inform people on how to spot severe weather, and how to protect yourself and your family. You need not be an amateur radio operator or weather spotter to attend. Anyone of any age is welcome, bring your family and friends, the more the merrier! The auditorium is a very nice facility with padded seats and stadium seating so everyone can see. Hope to see you there!  
W8ISH

## Wednesday Night Dinner Group

The Wednesday night dinner group will be at the following locations on the dates listed below.

April 12th. Sirloin Stockade	Colombus, In.
April 19th. Fridays	Greenwood mall next to LS Ayres
April 26th. Athens Rest.	Northwood Plaza Franklin

All are welcome, join the fun, good food, good people, bring the family.  
KF9LQ

### PRB-1

Hak Gilk, WA2CCN of Lincoln Rhode Island has found himself in a situation of dubious envy-a bit like the dog who chased cars and finally catches one. Now, what does he do with it? Several months ago, Gilk took it upon himself to write Sen. Jonathan F. Oster, who represents the district where he lives, to request state legislation that supports PRB-1, the limited federal pre-emption. Much to his surprise, Oster wrote him back to let him know that he'd introduce a bill, 2000-S 2304, in March in Rhode Island's General Assembly. Now, Gilk figures the ball is in his court to drum up enthusiasm and support the bill among the Ocean State's amateur community. The measure would prevent localities enacting or attempting to enact zoning restrictions or prohibitions against the installation or use of towers "and/or antennas" by Amateur Radio licensees that would make effective radio communications "difficult or impossible." The Rhode Island bill specifies a minimum 50-foot tower height. Gilk says Oster came up with the number on his own. "I'm incredibly impressed with the responsiveness of Sen Oster on this matter, and certainly want him to know that he has the support of Rhode Island's amateurs." Gilk said this week. "I don't have a clue about how he came up with the 50-foot idea."

Gilk now is soliciting comments from Rhode Island hams on whether to leave that figure in the bill or propose something different. A former ARRL Headquarters staff member, Gilk also has sought assistance from the ARRL, in seeing the bill over the legislative hurdles that lie ahead.

So far, ten states have PRB-1 laws in place. New York and Kansas also are considering PRB-1 bills. from ARRL newsletter

## Enforcement

### FCC LEVIES FINE

The FCC told a former Houston, Texas, amateur that he's liable for a \$17,000 fine for unlicensed operation and for failing to allow the FCC to inspect his radio equipment. A Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture-an NAL-was sent March 3 to Leonard Martin, formerly KC5WHM, by the FCC Houston Office.

Martin has bumped heads with the FCC on several occasions. The FCC said it received a written complaint in May 1998 alleging that a station identifying as KC5WHM was operating on frequencies not authorized by his Technician ticket. FCC Special Counsel for Amateur Radio Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth sent Martin a Warning Notice in November 1998 outlining the complaints. The Commission said Martin "generally denied the unauthorized operation."

After tracking transmission on various 27MHz frequencies to Martin's residence on at least two occasions in early 1999, an FCC agent was sent twice rebuffed in his efforts to inspect Martin's radio equipment. The FCC's Houston Office issued an Official Notice of Violation last April. Martin acknowledged the complaint and promised that "no further action by the Commission" would be necessary. In July, he turned in his Amateur Radio license for cancellation.

Martin's troubles didn't end there. Last October, following up on complaints of RF interference to a

telephone in Martin's neighborhood, the FCC again tracked 27 MHz transmissions to Martin's residence. Martin reportedly again refused to let the FCC inspect his equipment.

The FCC NAL said that, based on the evidence, Martin "repeatedly and willfully" violated section 301 of the Communications Act by operating without an FCC license and by refusing to allow an FCC inspection of his radio station. Martin has 30 days to pay or request reduction or cancellation of the proposed forfeiture.  
from ARRL newsletter

## **Public service**

### **Early Wisconsin Tornado**

Amateur Radio storm spotters were all over Wisconsin Wednesday, March, 8, when the earliest tornado on record hit Milwaukee County, Wisconsin and Wisconsin's SEC says he thinks hams were the first to report the phenomenon to the National Weather Service.

The storm hit around 6PM. near Mitchell international Airport-Wisconsin's largest airfield-and moved northeast. Several minor injuries were reported, some vehicles were overturned, buildings lost roofs, power poles and trees were downed, and some gas leaks were reported.

ARRL Wisconsin Section Emergency Coordinator Stan Kaplin, reports that hams regularly fed the National Weather Service at Sullivan with hail and wind reports. "All ham traffic was fed directly to NWS by local repeaters," Kaplin said. A number of hams were on-site near the tornado touchdown."

It's believed that Amateur Radio storm spotters were the first to report the touchdown to the NWS. The Weather Service rated the tornado as an F1 category storm. It cut a swath between 50 and 75 yards long over a mile and a quarter. Hail of up to 1.75 inches in diameter was reported at one point, although most of the hail reported by hams and others was of the much smaller half-inch variety. Milwaukee Area SKYWARN Association Executive

Director, Skip Voros, WD9HAS noted that the March 8 tornado broke the old record of April for an early tornado.

## **VE Testing April 15**

After the meeting on April 15, 2000, There will be the final VE testing under the old system. We will remove the tone from the repeater for that session and will have an operator on the WA9RDF 835 repeater, as a talk in assist for those wishing to test and having trouble finding our location. If you know of anyone who will be testing at our location that day, let them know about the talk in assistance. Spread the word.

Thanks Al WA9ZET

## **Club Meeting Saturday April 15Th. 8:00 am at the EOC**

Bring a friend, neighbor or other interested party  
Visit our web page at [www.midstatehams.org](http://www.midstatehams.org)  
Just as a reminder to these who have not yet paid their \$18.00 dues. You have until our May meeting day to retain your Autopatch privileges. I am sorry but this is necessary.

Send dues to   Vernon Gill, N9QBO  
                      MARC, PO. box 836  
                      Franklin, in. 46131  
                      Or pay at the meeting

## **Curran Electronics Sales and Service**

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Post Rd. on 19Th. St. then north on  
Wittfield to 1217           Red Mailbox**

# The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

## Membership

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club is based in Franklin, Indiana. Membership is open to all amateur radio operators and other interested parties.

Club meetings are conducted on the third Saturday of month in the training room of the Johnson County Emergency Operations Center at 1100 Hospital Road in Franklin, IN.

Membership dues are \$18.00 per year for full members. There types of memberships are available.

Amateur Radio Operator License testing is offered following the club meeting during the months of March through November.

The club maintains an open repeater on the 2-meter band at 146.835 MHz. Each full member has access to the repeater and autopatch.

Membership dues payments and change of address should be mailed to the club Treasurer at the address listed below.

## Newsletter

The Spark Gap is the monthly club newsletter. Articles and information that would be of interest to the club members are welcome. Information may be submitted by E-mail or by mailing to the club address listed below.

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